

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Watkins National Bank

AND/OR COMMON

Old Lawrence City Hall

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1047 Mass. St.

CITY, TOWN

Lawrence

STATE

Kansas

VICINITY OF

CODE 20

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

No. 3, Larry Winn

COUNTY Douglas

CODE 045

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT
☒ BUILDING(S)
☐ STRUCTURE
☐ SITE
☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC
☐ PRIVATE
☐ BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
☐ IN PROCESS
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED
☐ UNOCCUPIED
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
☐ YES: RESTRICTED
☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED
☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE
☐ COMMERCIAL
☐ EDUCATIONAL
☐ ENTERTAINMENT
☒ GOVERNMENT
☐ INDUSTRIAL
☐ MILITARY
☐ MUSEUM
☒ PARK
☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☐ RELIGIOUS
☐ SCIENTIFIC
☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

City of Lawrence

STREET & NUMBER

City Hall

CITY, TOWN

Lawrence

VICINITY OF

STATE

Kansas 66044

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Douglas County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Lawrence

STATE

Kansas 66044

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION**CONDITION**

☐ EXCELLENT
☒ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED
☐ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The two and one half story Watkins National Bank building has a combination hip and gable roof with three dormers on each side, a small dormer on the back, and a very large one in the front. The second story is penetrated with many evenly spaced windows with a single continuous stone sill to strengthen the horizontal movement.

The first story is plain with its arched windows making no significant impression. A strong horizontal line is produced by a wide band of contrasting rough-cut stone which pulls the eye around the building to the dominant feature, the massive semi-circular stone archway entrance. The half floor below the stone line is plain with uninteresting windows and no ornamentation.

The building measures 75 feet by 117 feet and has foundations which measure 12 feet across at the lowest point and taper up to the required basement wall thickness. The exterior plan is symmetrical about the longitudinal axis except for the archway. This single exception again tends to emphasize the importance of the entrance.

The Watkins National Bank building is significant. A classic example of the Romanesque influence on Kansas buildings.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1887

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Cobb and Frost, Chicago

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Watkins National Bank building was erected in 1887 for a Lawrence financier, Jabez B. Watkins. Watkins moved to Lawrence in 1873 and established himself as a lawyer and loan agent. He successfully solicited funds in the east to lend to farmers in Kansas and surrounding states. His company was incorporated in 1883 as the J. B. Watkins Land Mortgage Company with branch offices in London, New York City, Dallas, and Lake Charles. This company was one of the largest of its kind.

The second floor of the Watkins Building served as the home office of the mortgage company, and in 1888 the Watkins National Bank was established on the ground floor.

Watkins also owned a local newspaper, the Lawrence Record, and controlled the Lawrence Canning Company, said to be the largest vegetable cannery west of Baltimore.

The economic depression of the early 1890's brought disaster to many mortgage companies, and Watkins' firm went into receivership in 1894. The building continued to serve the Watkins bank until it was left vacant by a bank merger in 1929. Mrs. J. B. Watkins then donated the building to the city of Lawrence, which used it as the City Hall until 1970.

Presently city officials and citizens interested in the building's preservation are searching for a way in which the building may continue to serve the community.

The Watkins National Bank building is a classic example of the Romanesque influence on Kansas buildings.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Ensign, Lillie May, "Lawrence Realizes Some Objectives," Kansas Municipalities, v. 16, no. 1 (January, 1930), pp. 18-23.
Bogue, Allan G., "The Land Mortgage Company in the Early Plain States," Agricultural History, v. 25, no. 1 (January, 1951), pp. 20-33.
"The Historic City," Topeka Capital, August 8, 1888.
Lawrence Daily Record, September 12, 1890.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____
UTM REFERENCES

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	D	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Charles Hall
Richard Pankratz

ORGANIZATION

Kansas State Historical Society

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

120 West Tenth Street

TELEPHONE

913-296-3251

CITY OR TOWN

Topeka

STATE

Kansas 66612

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ____

STATE ____

LOCAL ____

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER